

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
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TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) COVID-19 Member Guidance

Updated July 16, 2020

Is NET still available for my appointments during the pandemic?

Yes, NET is still offering rides to MaineCare members for MaineCare covered services.

Do I need to wear a face covering if I take NET?

Yes. Under Governor Mills' extension of the Stay at Home Order, starting May 1, 2020, MaineCare members and NET drivers are required to wear face coverings during NET rides, as physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain. Under the order, face coverings are not required for children under age two, for anyone who has trouble breathing, for anyone with other medical conditions that prevent wearing a mask, or for anyone who is otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance. **Please alert the broker if you are not able to wear a face covering when you call to schedule the ride.**

If you have a disability that you believe prevents you from participating in, or fully benefiting from, the MaineCare NET program, and you believe that there is a reasonable change that could be made, you may ask the Department to make a change to the program under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). You can find additional information on how to request a reasonable modification [here](#).

If you do not alert the broker, have not made a reasonable modification request that has been approved, are not wearing a face covering when the driver arrives, or refuse to wear a face covering, the ride may be denied if the driver believes there is a direct threat to the safety of others or if the ride will be shared with other members.

Will the driver provide me with a face covering for my ride?

Drivers are not obligated to provide face coverings to riders, though some drivers may have disposable face coverings available. Therefore, MaineCare members should plan on providing their own face coverings. More information about homemade face coverings can be found [here](#), and [here](#) is information about face coverings sold by Maine manufacturers.

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Will my driver have to wear a face covering?

Yes. Drivers are required to wear a face covering, unless they are unable to do so. Drivers who cannot wear a face covering must have a clear plastic barrier installed in their vehicles to isolate the driver from riders.

If I need to get tested for COVID-19, will I be able to take NET?

We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19—call ahead before going to your primary care practice or any other health care facility. Should your health care provider advise you to go in for testing, or if, in accordance with the [Maine CDC's Standing Order](#), you wish to be tested because you face a higher risk of exposure (with or without symptoms) but don't have a health care provider or a written order for a test from a health care provider, NET will arrange for your transport to a testing site. **Please alert the broker of the reason for your trip when you call to schedule the ride** so they can appropriately arrange for the safety of your trip. If you have COVID-19 and require emergency care, call 911.

Examples of people who might face a higher risk of exposure include health care workers and first responders; seasonal and migrant farm workers; people experiencing homelessness; and people who work at congregate living facilities (such as nursing homes), lodging establishments, grocery stores, and other businesses that have direct, daily contact with the public.

You can search for testing sites near you [here](#).

If you are unsure whether you can get a ride through NET to your preferred testing site, you can check with the NET broker or Member Services (1-800-977-6740). NET is only available for transportation to MaineCare covered services.

If I need to go to the doctor to be treated for COVID-19, will I be able to take NET?

We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19: call your health care provider before going to your primary care practice or any other healthcare facility. Should your health care provider advise you to go in for COVID-19 treatment, NET will arrange for your transport. **Please alert the broker of the reason for your trip when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip. If you have COVID-19 and require emergency care, call 911.



Can volunteer drivers (who receive mileage reimbursement) drive me for a trip related to COVID-19?

A volunteer driver may drive you to get a COVID-19 test if the test is a pre-surgical requirement **and** if you have no COVID-19 symptoms or known exposure to anyone with COVID-19 symptoms.

For COVID-19 related trips other than required pre-surgical testing, a volunteer driver may drive you **only** if that driver lives in your household.

As a reminder, volunteer drivers must contact the NET broker two days prior to delivering the trip for which they are seeking mileage reimbursement.

If I have or might have COVID-19 but I need to go to an essential medical appointment like dialysis or infusion, will I be able to take NET?

Before requesting a trip, call your health care provider to explore whether any in-home services may be an appropriate alternative to visiting a health care facility. If there are no in-home options, NET will arrange for your transport through an ambulance provider. **Please alert the broker that you have or might have COVID-19 when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip.

If I am sick, will I be able to take NET?

We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick, especially with symptoms that are common to COVID-19 (e.g. fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or sore throat): call your health care provider before going to your primary care practice or any other health care facility. If your health care provider tells you to go into the office, NET will arrange for your transport. **Please alert the broker that you are sick when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip. If you require emergency care, call 911.

If I take NET, will I have to share the vehicle with other people?

Brokers are encouraged to schedule solo rides if there are enough drivers available to do so.

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How are the NET brokers and transporters preparing for COVID-19?

Brokers have implemented cleaning protocols for transporters and drivers to keep vehicles sanitized. To limit close contact, brokers are discontinuing their practice of having MaineCare members sign the trip log. Drivers are also required to wear a face covering, unless they are unable to do so for health reasons. Drivers who cannot wear a face covering must have a clear plastic barrier installed in their vehicles to isolate the driver from riders.

If there is a driver shortage, will NET have to prioritize some trips over others?

The Department is looking closely at contingency planning for a scenario in which there are not enough drivers to meet the demand for rides. We encourage members to take advantage of mileage reimbursement that brokers offer for volunteer drivers (e.g. friends, family, and neighbors) when appropriate.